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Network News

East Timor Action Network / U.S.
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Welcome!

You're reading the first issue of the newsletter of the East Timor Action Network/U.S. If you find it useful, we'll publish this to help ETAN activists stay abreast of developments in East Timor, Indonesia, and U.S. government complicity in the continuing genocide.

Most importantly, we intend to describe what's being done around the country and the world to end the 17-year Indonesian military occupation of East Timor. Write us of your actions, successes, and ideas.

ETAN Meeting July 19

The next ETAN meeting will be on Sunday afternoon, July 19, at 1:00 pm at the A.J. Muste Institute office, 339 Lafayette Street, Manhattan. As a national network, we realize that you probably can't come to New York, but we welcome your input. Call or send a fax, email message, or letter with your ideas and suggestions.

UN Hearing July 27

The United Nations Decolonization Committee will hold its annual hearing on East Timor starting at 10 am on Monday, July 27, in New York City. If you'd like to attend but don't have a UN pass, call John Miller at 718-788-6071 to arrange to get in.

Supporters of East Timor from around the world will be in New York, and ETAN/U.S. will help with logistics and hospitality, as well as presenting testimony. After the hearing, you're invited to meet our international guests. The following day, there will be a solidarity strategy meeting; call if you're interested.

Come to a Reception for International Timor Supporters

Monday, July 27 7:00 pm
30 E. 62 Street Apt.14A, NYC
RSVP: 914-428-7299

House of Representatives Cuts U.S. Training for Indonesian Military

On June 25, the House of Representatives eliminated military training for the Indonesian armed forces from the 1993 budget. In a unanimous voice vote, the House adopted the Machtley-Hall amendment to delete $2.3 million under the IMET (International Military Education and Training) program from the foreign aid bill (H.R.5368). Under IMET, 2,600 Indonesian officers have attended U.S. war colleges since Indonesia invaded East Timor in 1975.

The Indonesian government is taking this, the first time Congress has cut funding over East Timor, very seriously. ETAN is urging Senate Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Patrick Leahy (D-VT) and other Senators to ratify the House action and go further by suspending arms sales and deliveries to Indonesia. These shipments, over $130 million last year, provide the majority of the weaponry Indonesia has used to kill 200,000 Timorese (one-third of the population). The Subcommittee will consider the bill the week of July 20. Join ETAN's fax/e-mail Rapid Response Network.

Representatives Tony Hall (D-OH), Ronald Machtley (R-RI) and others are also sponsoring H.R.5176, a bill which imposes comprehensive aid, trade, and arms sales sanctions until Jakarta withdraws from East Timor, permits human rights observers in and allows a U.N.-supervised referendum for self-determination. Congresspeople should be encouraged to support this more far-reaching measure in addition to suspending IMET and arms sales. Since its introduction in mid-May, H.R.5176 has been endorsed by a wide range of human rights and peace organizations, as well as the New Jersey League of Women Voters.

Long Jail Sentences for Timorese

After last November's Santa Cruz massacre, Indonesia rounded up dozens of Timorese, charging them with taking part in nonviolent protests against the occupation. Several have been sentenced: Gregorio da Cunha got life in prison; Francisco Miranda Branco got 15 years. Four others got 9-10 years, six more got 4-8 years, and other trials are still pending.

By contrast, ten military men court-martialed after killing over 140 people in the massacre received jail terms of 18 months or less. Two generals who were reassigned attend university in the United States, while their replacements take an even more explicit hard line against the Timorese struggle for self-determination.

Indonesian Defense Minister Benny Murdani defends the disparity: "This (separatist activity) is subversion, while the military officers were found guilty of ignoring instructions and acting beyond their authority."

Mayors Support Timor

The annual U.S. Conference of Mayors, in Houston on June 21, adopted a resolution on Human Rights in East Timor, decrying the Santa Cruz massacre, the deaths of over 100,000 people, and ongoing human rights violations. They point out that "the United States and Indonesia have maintained close bilateral ties ... including a program of economic and military assistance," and urge Bush and Congress to support a General Assembly resolution to send a human rights investigator to East Timor and "assist in the resolution of the conflict, providing for self-determination of the Timorese people."

The resolution was initiated by Mayor Dave Karp of San Leandro (CA), with the help of ETAN/San Francisco, and supported by Republicans and Democrats from around the country. The injustice of Indonesia's occupation of East Timor (with U.S. complicity) is so obvious that if you call it to people's attention, they'll take action. Try it!

Resources Available

The East Timor Action Network has a fresh supply of materials to help spread the word. Wear your awareness with a "Free East Timor" button ($1, with a photo of a young Timorese girl) or T-shirt ("Free East Timor" and a three-color Timorese flag on the front, "To Resist is to Win – Xanana Gusmao" on the back, $12 plus $1 postage, indicate size).

We also have Max Stahl's excellent one-hour video *Cold Blood: The Massacre of East Timor* for non-commercial use. This tape includes footage of the Santa Cruz massacre, interviews with many Timorese people both inside the country and in exile, and historical background, and is an outstanding organizing tool. ETAN is selling it for $25 or renting it for $15.

Network News is sent free to anyone who requests it, although donations are sorely needed. If you would like more information, ETAN publishes a monthly compilation of documents, analyses and news reports (about 70 pages per month, $6). If that's too much information, TAPOL's bi-monthly bulletin ($21/year from 111 Northwood Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey CR7 8HW, U.K.) is a good compromise.

ETAN/U.S. has a variety of reprints and pamphlets on different facets of this issue; let us know what you would like. And we're still selling John G. Taylor's book *Indonesia's Forgotten War: The Hidden History of East Timor* (1991) for $20.

Purchases should be payable to "Foreign Bases Project/ETAN." Contributions can be made to Foreign Bases Project or, to support our tax-deductible educational work, to "WESPAC Foundation/ETAN."

The Education of Robert Barry

President Bush recently nominated a new U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia. Robert L. Barry, who has spent most of his career in Eastern Europe, is currently a special advisor to Kissinger protege Lawrence Eagleburger.

When Barry appeared before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Alan Cranston noted that "the Indonesian government has not yet recognized the seriousness of its problem with the United States" (over East Timor) and expressed his hope that Barry "will vigorously press the Indonesian government to address the underlying causes of the continued conflict in East Timor."

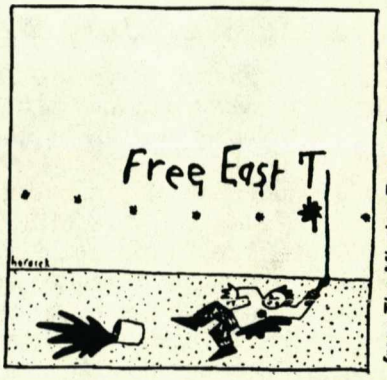
On June 29, the American-Indonesian Chamber of Commerce held a reception for Ambassador Barry in New York City. In addition to 40 businesspeople, several East Timor supporters attended and urged the Ambassador and others to consider human rights when dealing with Indonesia. Thanks to Bishop Paul Moore's initiative (and due to the lack of other questions), the entire plenary discussion was on Indonesian immorality in East Timor.

Following the program (where ETAN gave a letter to Barry and an information packet to interested people), Amy Goodman, Allan Nairn and Charlie Scheiner engaged in an extended discussion with the AICC executive director and a vice-president of Hill & Knowlton, a public relations firm which represents Indonesia. The conversation was cordial, but it was clear that human considerations do not enter Hill & Knowlton's calculations.

New Aid Consortium to Meet in Paris

On July 16-17, the Consultative Group on Indonesia holds its first meeting, in Paris. This new grouping, coordinated by the World Bank, replaces the Inter-Governmental Group on Indonesia (IGGI) which was abolished by Suharto in response to Dutch protests of human rights violations. IGGI had been chaired by the Netherlands, and coordinated close to $5 billion in annual aid and loans. Suharto expects the World Bank, Japan and the Asian Development Bank (Indonesia's largest donors) not to meddle in what he considers domestic affairs.

Timor activists are trying to make him wrong: a campaign culminating in demonstrations at the Paris meeting is pressuring participating governments to refuse to fund Jakarta until the Timor situation improves. The U.S. representative to CGI is E. Patrick Coady, U.S. World Bank, Rm D1328, 1818 H St. NW, Washington, DC 20433, fax 202-477-6391. Although the Paris meeting will be nearly over by the time you get this, we need to increase the cost to Indonesia of repressing East Timor.



from *The Missing Peace*, Australia

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Address correction requested.